

Offer multiple service methods to meet increasing customer expectations and overcome barriers of geography.

[illegible]

- Provide a customer-friendly view of electronic government services.
- Continue to build e-government applications to provide anytime, anywhere services.
- Coordinate statewide help desk services and explore the expansion to 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week coverage based on demand.

How citizens interact with government is changing rapidly as technological advances offer new possibilities for providing service. While some people will continue to feel more comfortable filing traditional paper forms, others are demanding online access to information and services from their homes and businesses. *A survey by the Social Science Research Institute in June of 2002 showed that an astounding 70 percent of citizens and 80 percent of businesses in North Dakota use the Internet.* The vast majority of these users said that having government services online is more convenient and allows better access to information. The state has already developed 37 online applications — like the purchase of fishing licenses. Many more government applications need to be developed until eventually all forms and services are online.

In addition to having government services online, they also need to be easy to find. Citizens and businesses should not be frustrated trying to navigate a maze of state agencies and programs. The DiscoverND web site provides a one-stop approach to government services and has

advanced search capabilities to get customer where they need to be. Maintaining this portal with current, fresh information will be a priority. Not only does it improve services to our citizens, but it is also a marketing tool to attract new businesses and visitors to the state.

As more and more government services go online, expectations also increase. Citizens may assume that online means always available, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If they need help filling out a form or accessing an application, the advantage of the online convenience is diminished if support is only available from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. As the state moves to deploy more critical functions like law enforcement systems, it will be imperative that we examine the need for around-the-clock support. During the next biennium, as major initiatives like ConnectND and the Criminal Justice Information Sharing project are deployed, we will need to determine the requirements and costs associated with expanding support options and establish a course of action.



Jim logged on to the Internet at 4:00 a.m. and browsed for a license at discovernd.com/gnf. At 4:45 a.m. he was hooking the big one.

